

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended. New claims 21-24 have been added. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka in view of Park et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. The Examiner asserted that Fig. 5B of Park et al. shows "a portion of 108 remains over 112."

In Fig. 5B of Park et al., Applicant notes that the oxide layer 108 remains on the gate line 104, not between the bit line patterns, as recited in claim 1. A portion of the oxide layer 108 remaining on the side of the gate line 108 is over the device isolation region 102, again not between the bit line patterns. The cited references do not disclose or suggest, "etching the first inter-layer insulation layer to define a trench between the bit line patterns, so that at least a partial portion of the first inter-layer insulation layer remains below the trench and over the first barrier layer between the bit line patterns, wherein a portion of the first barrier layer provided below the trench and between the bit line patterns is not exposed by the etching-the-first-inter-layer-insulation-layer step (emphasis added)," recited in claim 1. Claim 1 is allowable at least for this reason.

Claim 11 recites, "forming first and second bit line patterns that defines a first trench therebetween..." and "etching the first inter-layer insulation layer until a second trench is defined between the first and second bit line patterns without exposing the first barrier layer provided between the first and second bit line patterns (emphasis added)." Neither references disclose or suggest the above features. Claim 11 is allowable at least for this reason.

Claims 2-10 and 12-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka and Park et al. in view of Huang. Applicants respectfully traverses the rejection. The above claims depend from claim 1 or 11 and are allowable at least for this reason.

Appl. No. 10/749,533
Amdt. dated November 1, 2006
Reply to Office Action of August 28, 2006

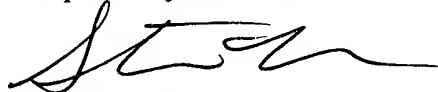
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,



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